

## Is An Aspirin a Day Still OK?



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## American Diabetes Association

- Currently recommends a daily low dose of aspirin (75-162 mg) for the following groups



## One low dose aspirin a day for:

- People with diabetes who have had a heart attack or stroke or who have been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease



## One low dose aspirin a day for:

- People with diabetes who are at increased risk for developing CVD because:
  - Over 40
  - Family history of CVD
  - Smoke
  - High blood pressure (being treated for)
  - High cholesterol (being treated for)
  - Protein in urine



## Reasons from ADA

- People with diabetes have a 2-4 times risk for developing heart disease
- People with diabetes have increased "platelet aggregation" (blood is more likely to clot than normal)



## Sticky Blood

- Blood is made up of red and white blood cells, plasma, platelets
- RBC carry O<sub>2</sub>
- WBC fight germs
- Platelets are sticky particles that help heal wounds by causing the blood to clot at the site of an injury
- Plasma is the liquid





### Sticky Blood



- In diabetes, platelets tend to be too sticky and are more likely to form clots when clotting is not needed
- Aspirin “thins” the blood to make the platelets less sticky



Always discuss with your doctor before starting aspirin. Certain medical conditions or medications can interfere or interact with aspirin and may be unsafe.



### Remember:

- Aspirin can be an ingredient in some combination medicines
- The most common side effect is irritation of the stomach lining. Use a coated aspirin product or take with food
- Best to take at the same time each day
- Aspirin does degrade over time. Discard if it smells like vinegar



### Remember:

- Avoid taking aspirin with NSAID's
  - Ibuprofen
  - Naproxen
  - Diclofenac
- May increase the side effects and make the medications less effective



### Stomach irritation

- The higher the dose of aspirin, the greater risk of stomach irritation
- Drinking more than 3 alcoholic drinks a day raises risk of stomach irritation and bleeding
- History of GERD and stomach ulcers
- Steroids such as prednisone
- Smoking
- Gout
- Kidney disease
- Liver disease
- Taking a blood thinner such as Coumadin, Lovenox
- Taking Plavix



### Don't rely on ...

- An aspirin will not protect you from developing CVD by itself
- Heart-healthy eating
- Healthy weight
- Physical activity
- Blood glucose control
- Stop smoking
- Blood lipid control





### **New Findings ...**

- Use of aspirin to prevent heart attacks and strokes in people who do not have CVD has little benefit
- Use of aspirin for people who have CVD is beneficial in preventing heart attacks
- More long term studies are needed



### **Aspirin is Powerful**

- Over the counter
- Use caution
- A powerful drug
- Review aspirin use with your doctor at least once a year and if your condition or medications change

